

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 and 10-20 are pending.

Claims 6 and 16 have been amended to correct typographical errors in relation to the term “bus guardian”. No new matter is being added.

On pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action, numbered paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 object to claim 16 on the grounds of containing an informality, namely that the limitation “the bus guardian” of claim 16 lacks an antecedent basis. As claim 16 has now been corrected, it is respectfully submitted that this objection is now rendered moot. The Examiner is thanked for pointing out the typographical error in claim 16.

On page 3 of the Office Action, claims 1, 5, 6, 10, 11, 15-18, and 20 are currently rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by US patent no. 7,124,316 (hereinafter referred to as “Kopetz et al.”). Applicants are traversing this rejection.

The application presently contains two independent claims, namely claims 1 and 11. Below, Applicants explain that Kopetz et al. does not teach all of the elements of claims 1 and 11.

As explained in Applicant’s previous remarks, Kopetz et al. teaches a system and method for handling so-called SOS faults in a fault-tolerant distributed computer system (see col. 2, line 64 – col. 3, line 3). Referring to col. 3, lines 58-62, the system comprises four node computers K1, K2, K3, K4, each connected to one of two replicated central distributor units V1, V2. As explained at col. 3, lines 62-64, a guardian GUA is disposed between each output of a node computer and each input of the distributor unit. The guardian GUA is either designed to be independent or can be integrated into the distributor unit (col. 3, lines 64-65).

Kopetz et al. is silent as to whether the guardians are input guardians. Furthermore, Kopetz et al. describes very specific functionality of the guardians at col. 5, lines 22-34.

Turning to claim 1, claim 1 recites an arrangement for connecting a node in a distributed system containing fail-uncontrolled nodes, the arrangement comprising:

- a receiver for receiving signals from another node of the system
- a node guardian coupled to the receiver
- to control selectively reception according to a predetermined TDMA schedule
- of a message thereat so as to reduce reception of uncontrolled transmission from another node of the system.

However, the function of the system of Kopetz et al. is conveniently summarised at col. 2, line 64 – col. 3, line 3 thereof, namely the conversion of a message burdened with an SOS fault either (a) into a correct message, or (b) into a message that can be recognised by all receiving node computers as clearly incorrect. This is different to the selective control of reception of a message that is sent during a specific transmission slot of a TDMA schedule. It is pointed out that locking a channel during the internal time, T_{GUA} , as described at col. 3, lines 25-34 and col. 5, lines 30-34 of Kopetz et al., is not the same as selectively controlling reception according to a predetermined TDMA schedule.

In the Response to Arguments section on page 6 of the Final Office Action, it is argued that Kopetz et al. “teaches guardians located between each output of a node computer and each input of a distributor unit (column 3, lines 61-64)”. It is also stated that the “guardians correct “slightly off specification” (SOS) faults within the Time-Triggered Protocol (TTP/C) network (column 2, line 49 – column 3, line 3), wherein an SOS fault is caused by message with signals slightly outside the required time domain (column 2 lines 27-39)”. The Response to Arguments then concludes that since TTP is based on TDMA timing, Kopetz et al. clearly discloses “selective control of reception according to a predetermined TDMA schedule”.

Unfortunately, this conclusion overlooks a subtlety of the language of claim 1. In this regard, claim 1 recites “to control selectively reception according to a predetermined TDMA schedule of a message thereat ...”. Hence, it can be seen that selective control of the reception is

at the node guardian, or in an alternative interpretation at the receiver coupled to the node guardian. In any event, this is very clearly different from the guardians of Kopetz et al., which do not control receipt thereat. Instead, they control their output so as to correct a message or accentuate an error so that it is clearly recognised before onward transmission to other nodes in the network.

Consequently, control of reception thereat in accordance with a predetermined TDMA schedule is not provided by Kopetz et al. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that as the selective control of receipt at the node guardian is not preformed by Kopetz et al., Kopetz et al. cannot disclose that the selective control of receipt at the node guardian is provided to reduce reception of uncontrolled transmission from another node of the system. Clearly, this is in respect of receipt at the node guardian.

It is therefore submitted that Kopetz et al. fails to disclose a guardian to control selectively reception according to a predetermined TDMA schedule of a message thereat, as recited in claim 1. Furthermore, Kopetz et al. fails to disclose selective control of reception thereat so as to reduce reception of uncontrolled transmission from another node of the system, as recited in claim 1.

In view of the reasoning provided above, Applicant submits that Kopetz et al. does not anticipate claim 1.

Claims 2-6, and 10 depend from claim 1. By virtue of this dependence, claims 2-6, and 10 are also novel.

Claim 11 is a method of operating a node in a fail-uncontrolled distributed system corresponding to the arrangement of claim 1. Consequently, arguments set forth above in support of claim 1 apply equally to claim 11. As such, it is therefore respectfully submitted that Kopetz et al. fails to teach a node guardian controlling selectively according to a predetermined TDMA schedule reception of a message thereat, as recited in claim 11. Furthermore, Kopetz et

al. fails to disclose selective control of reception thereat so as to reduce reception of uncontrolled transmission from another node of the system, as recited in claim 11.

In view of the reasoning provided above, Applicant submits that Kopetz et al. does not anticipate claim 11.

Claims 12-20 depend from claim 11. By virtue of this dependence, claims 12-20 are also novel.

The case is believed to be in condition for allowance and notice to such effect is respectfully requested. If there is any issue that may be resolved, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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